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Review of a Letter from Elias Hicks to
Dr. N. Shoemaker. 4th ed. 1823.

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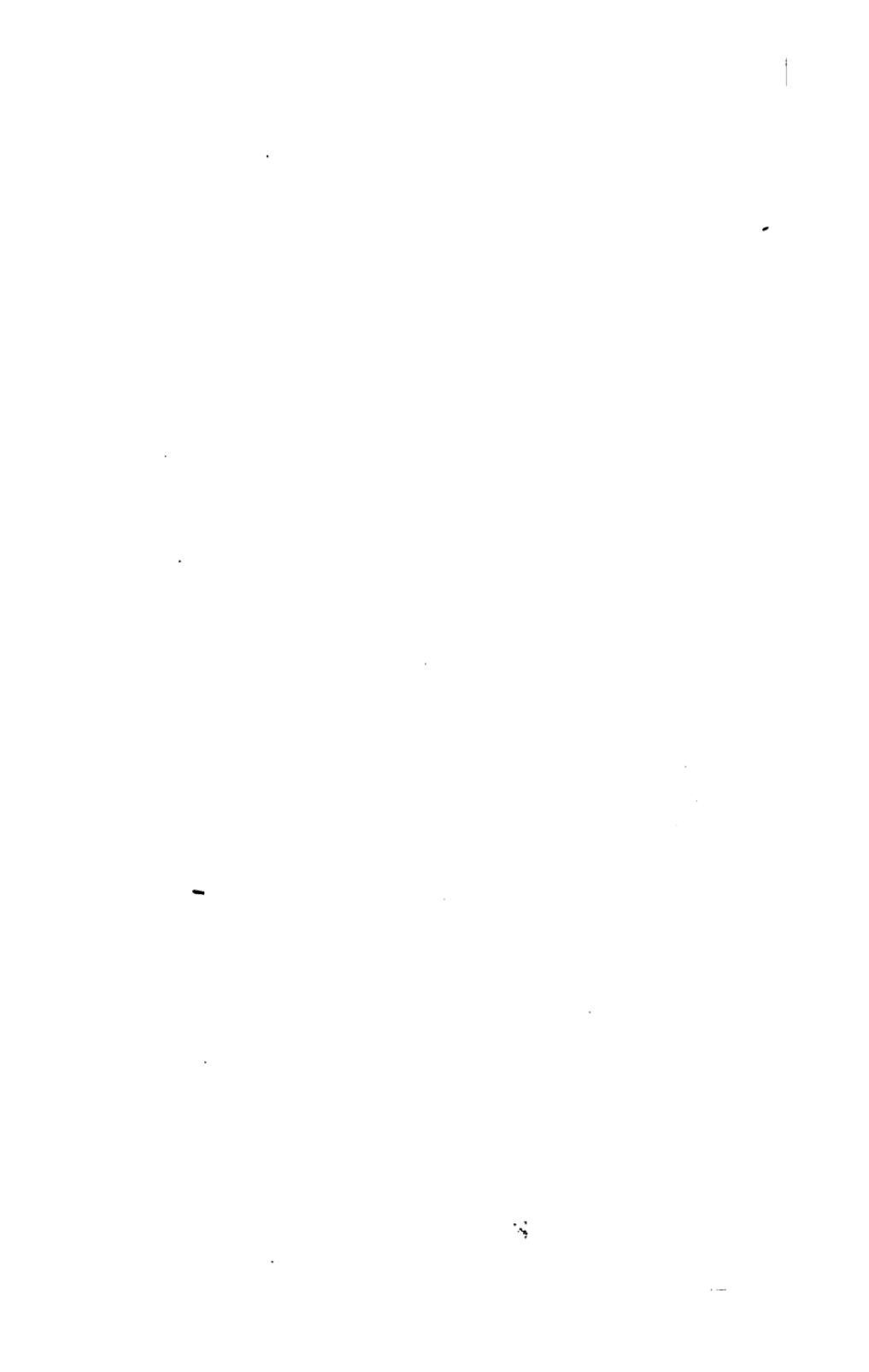


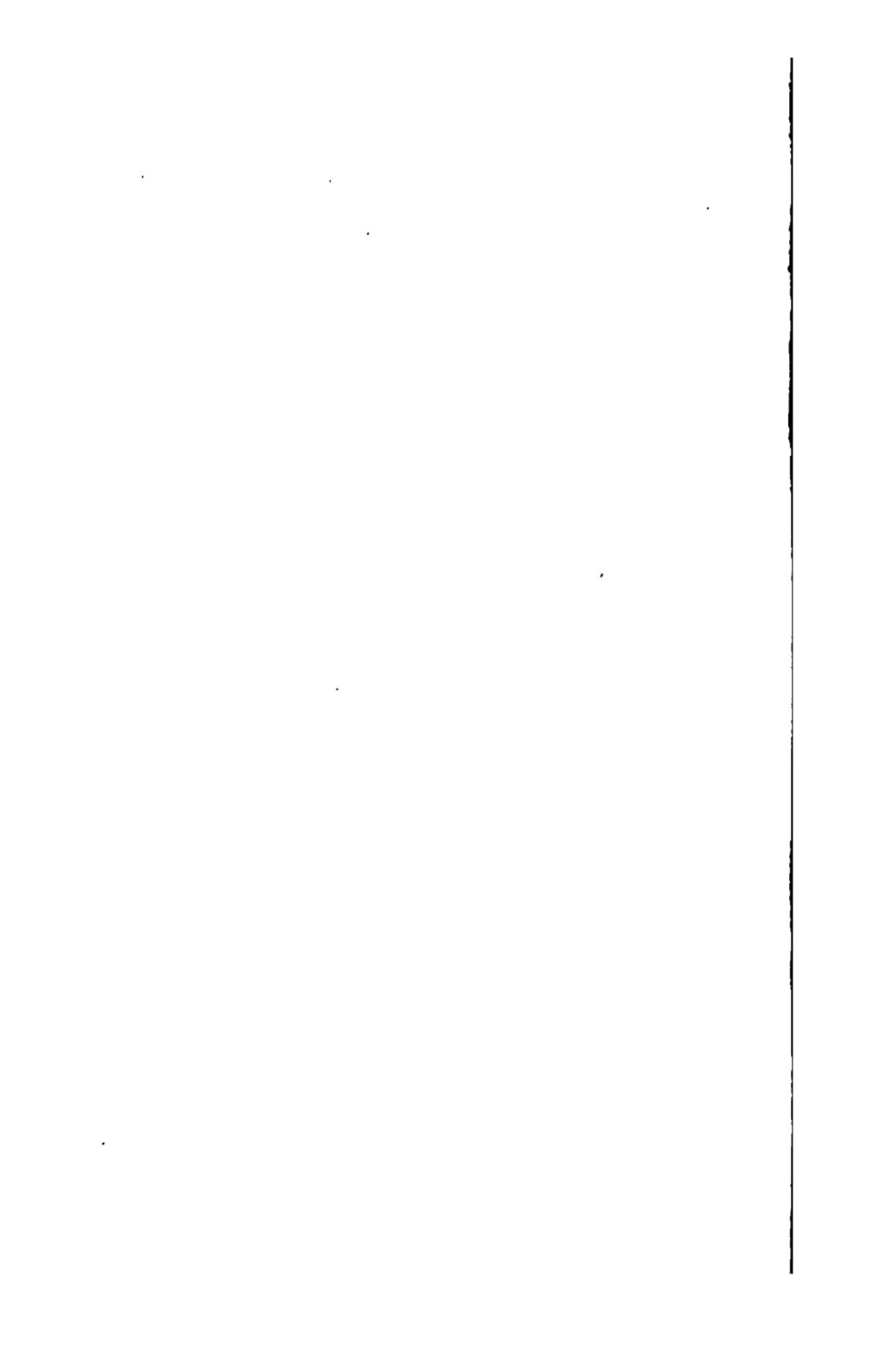
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REVIEW

OF A LETTER

FROM ELIAS HICKS

TO

DR. N. SHOEMAKER.

FOURTH EDITION.

Philadelphia:

PRINTED BY THOMAS KITE—64 WALNUT STREET.

1829.

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NOTE.—The following letter of Elias Hicks to Nathan Shoemaker, has been widely disseminated in manuscript, and represented by its admirers as containing more rational and consistent views on the doctrine of the atonement, &c. than those held by Christian professors. It purports to be a deliberate reply to certain queries propounded for the author's consideration. The writer says, "he considers the whole subject to be a very simple one;" and as he had nearly two months to reflect upon it before writing his answer, we may fairly conclude that he has given us his sober and matured opinion on the points in question. How "soever" he has made the subject appear, by his manner of treating it in this letter, we shall endeavour to show remarks.

M

LETTER
FROM
ELIAS HICKS TO DR. N. SHOEMAKER,
OF PHILADELPHIA.

Jericho, 3d mo. 31st, 1823.

DEAR FRIEND,

Thy acceptable letter of 1st month last, came duly to hand, but my religious engagements, and other necessary concerns, have prevented my giving it that attention that its contents seem to demand. Thou queries after my views of the suffering of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and what was the object of the shedding of his blood on the cross, and what benefits resulted to mankind by the shedding of this blood, &c. I shall answer in a very simple way, as I consider the whole subject to be a very simple one, as all truth is simple when we free ourselves from the improper bias of tradition and education, which rests as a burthensome stone on the minds of most of the children of men, and which very much mars the unity and harmony of society.

1st. By what means did Jesus suffer ? The answer is plain, by the hands of wicked men, and because his works were righteous and theirs were wicked. Query. Did God send him into the world purposely to suffer death by the hands of wicked men ? By no means ; but to live a righteous and godly life, (which was the design and end of God's creating man in the beginning,) and thereby be a perfect example to such of mankind as should come to the knowledge of him and of his perfect life. For, if it was the purpose and will of God that he should die by the hands of wicked men, then the Jews, by crucifying him, would have done God's will, and of course would all have stood justified in his sight, which could not be. But it was permitted so to be, as it had been with many of the prophets and wise and good men that were before him, who suffered death by the

hands of wicked men for righteousness sake, as ensamples to those that came after, that they should account nothing too dear to give up for the truth's sake, not even their own lives.

But the shedding of his blood by the wicked scribes and pharisees, and people of Israel, had a particular effect on the Jewish nation, as by this, the topstone and worst of all their crimes, was filled up the measure of their iniquities, and which put an end to that dispensation, together with its law and covenant. That as John's baptism summed up in one, all the previous water baptisms of that dispensation, and put an end to them, which he sealed with his blood, so this sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, summed up in one all the outward atoning sacrifices of the shadowy dispensation, and put an end to them all, thereby abolishing the law, having previously fulfilled all its righteousness, and, as saith the apostle, "He blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances, nailing them to his cross;" having put an end to the law that commanded them, with all its legal sins, and abolished all its legal penalties, so that all the Israelites that believed on him, after he exclaimed on the cross, "It is finished," might abstain from all the rituals of their law, such as circumcision, water baptisms, outward sacrifices, seventh day sabbaths, and all their other holy days, &c. and be blameless: and the legal sins that any were guilty of, was now remitted and done away by the abolishment of the law that commanded them, for "where there is no law there is no transgression." But those that did not believe on him, many of them were destroyed by the sword, and the rest were scattered abroad in the earth. But, *I do not consider that the crucifixion of the outward body of flesh and blood of Jesus on the cross, was an atonement for any sins but the legal sins of the Jews*; for as their law was outward, so their legal sins and their penalties were outward, and these could be atoned for by an outward sacrifice; and this last outward sacrifice was a full type of the inward sacrifice that every sinner must make, in giving up that sinful life of his own will, in and by which he hath from time to time, crucified the innocent life of God in his own soul; and which Paul calls "the old man with his deeds," or "the man of sin and son of perdition," who hath taken God's seat in the heart, and there exalteth itself above all that is called God, or is worshipped, sitting as Judge and Supreme. Now all this life, power, and will of man, must be slain and die on the cross spiritually, as Jesus died on the cross outwardly, and this is the true atonement, which that outward atonement was a clear and full type of. This the apostle Paul sets forth in a plain manner, Ro-

mans, vi. 3 & 4. " Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death ? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead (outwardly), by the glory of the Father, even so we," having by the spiritual baptism witnessed a death to sin, shall know a being raised up spiritually and walk in newness of life.

But the primitive Christian Church having soon after the apostles' days, turned away from the true and only sufficient guide, the Spirit of Truth, that Jesus commanded his disciples to wait for, and not attempt to do any thing until they had received it, but assured them that when they had received it, it would be a complete and sufficient rule, *without the addition of any other thing*, as it would lead them and guide them in all truth. And to its sufficiency, John, the beloved apostle, bore this noble and exalted testimony, in full accordance with his Divine Master, in this emphatic language to his fellow believers : " Ye have an unction from the Holy One, and need not that any man teach you, but as the same anointing teacheth you, whieh is truth, and is no lie." But the believers, by too much looking to their old traditions, soon lost sight of or neglected fully to attend, as they ought to have done, to their inward guide, turned their attention outward to the *letter*, which *always killeth those who lean upon it as a rule*. Hence, the successors of those meek and self-denying followers of the example and commands of Jesus, apostatised from the simplicity of the Gospel, by which the unity was broken, and they soon became divided into sects and parties, and persecuted each other ; and invented and promulgated inconsistent and unsound doctrines, such as original sin, certifying that all Adam's offspring was condemned to eternal punishment for one mis-step of our first parents ; for they don't appear to have been guilty of but one failure, and that it appears they made satisfaction for at the time of their first arraignment by their benevolent creator, manifesting sorrow and repentance : which seems to be fairly implied by the sequel of the interview between them ; for it is said he clothed them with coats of skin, to hide their nakedness, which is an emblem of durable clothing, *and as their nakedness was not an outward one*, but a nakedness of soul, not being able to conceal their sin from the all-penetrating Eye of Divine Justice, so when he had brought them, through conviction, to see their error and repent of it, he was reconciled to them, and clothed them again with his Holy Spirit.

And inasmuch as those idle promulgators of original sin,

believe they are made sinners, without their consent or knowledge, which, according to the nature and reason of things, every rational mind must see is impossible; so likewise they are idle and ignorant enough to believe they are made righteous without their consent or knowledge, by the righteousness of one who lived on the earth near two thousand years before they had an existence, and this by the cruel hands of wicked men slaying an innocent and righteous one; and these are bold and daring enough to lay this cruel and unholy act in the charge of Divine justice, as having purposely ordained it to be so: But what an outrage it is against every righteous law of God and man, as the Scriptures abundantly testify. See Exodus, c. 23, v. 7. "Keep thee far from a false matter, and the innocent and righteous slay thou not, for I will not justify the wicked." Deuteronomy, c. 27, v. 26. "Cursed be he that taketh reward to slay an innocent person;" and much might be produced to show the wickedness and absurdity of the doctrine, that would accuse the perfectly just, all-wise and merciful Jehovah, of so barbarous and cruel an act, as that of slaying his innocent and righteous Son, to atone for the sins and iniquities of the ungodly.

Surely, is it possible, that any rational being that has any right sense of justice or mercy, that would be willing to accept forgiveness of his sins on such terms!!! Would he not rather go forward and offer himself wholly up to suffer all the penalties due to his crimes, rather than the innocent should suffer? Nay—was he so hardy as to acknowledge a willingness to be saved through such a medium, would it not prove that he stood in direct opposition to every principle of justice and honesty, of mercy and love, and show himself to be a poor selfish creature, and unworthy of notice!!!

Having given thee a sketch of my views on the subject of thy queries, how far thou may consider them correct, I must leave to thy judgment and consideration; and may now recommend thee to shake off all traditional views that thou hast imbibed from external evidences, and turn thy mind to the light within, as thy only true teacher: wait patiently for its instruction, and it will teach thee more than men or books can do; and lead thee to a clearer sight and sense of what thou desirest to know, than I have words clearly to convey it to thee in. That this may be thy experience, is my sincere desire; and with love to thyself and family, I conclude,

Thy affectionate friend,

ELIAS HICKS.

DR. N. SHOEMAKER.

REVIEW, &c.

We suppose it will readily be admitted by all our readers, that the preceding letter exhibits the real sentiments of its author upon the several subjects of which it treats. His object in writing it, as stated in the exordium, appears to have been, to give "in a *very simple way*," his "views of the sufferings of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and what was the object of the shedding of his blood on the cross, and what benefits resulted to mankind by the shedding of this blood." We would request our readers to notice this particularly, as the letter contains so much irrelevant matter, that there is danger of losing sight of the *principal subjects*.

As Elias Hicks appeals to the Holy Scriptures as the authority for his opinions, and professes to predicate his arguments upon them, we shall assume it as *granted* that their authority is *finally conclusive*. We view them as the only legitimate test of our respective sentiments, and to be consistent with *his own practice*, he must concur with us in such judgment. In the following pages, therefore, Scripture language must be the umpire between us.

That Jesus Christ "suffered by the hands of wicked men;" "that *his* works were righteous and *theirs* wicked," are positions which we freely admit; but that his death was merely a consequence of this latter fact, or which is the same thing, that he was no more than a martyr to his principles, is to us not quite so clear. It is an assertion not supported by Scripture testimony, and as it is calculated to destroy our faith in the vicarious nature of his sufferings, we think it unsafe to adopt it.

Our blessed Redeemer tells us himself, and there can be no *higher authority*, that he "came to give his life a ransom for many;" "that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Elias Hicks asks, "Did God send him into the world purposely to suffer death by the hands of wicked men?"

His object in putting the query in this form, and in declar-

ing that the Jews put Jesus to death, merely because his works were righteous and theirs were wicked, must, we think, be obvious to all. It is to destroy, in the very outset, a belief in the atonement—to alarm us with the apparent absurdity of making wicked men agents in the plan of redemption—and to reduce the sufferings of the Son of God in the flesh, to a parallel with those of the martyrs. But Christ himself tells us that he *did come purposely* to suffer death, and *that his death* was to be a ransom for many. Now, whether he suffered by wicked or by righteous men, it cannot alter the nature or object of his sufferings—they are still *redeeming*.

If we vary the query so as to read, Did God send him into the world purposely to lay down his life a ransom for sinners? (and we shall still preserve the plain meaning of E. H.'s query,) we are compelled to reply in the affirmative, or to deny the concurrent testimony of the Lord Jesus himself, and of the prophets, evangelists, and apostles.

That it was a prominent part of the mission of the Saviour, “to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself,” and “to lay down his life for the sins of the whole world,” is evident from the following passages of Scripture :

“Surely he hath borne *our griefs*, and carried *our sorrows*, yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. *But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.* All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and *the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.* He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment, and who shall declare his generation, for he was cut off out of the land of the living; *for the transgression of my people was he stricken.* And he made his grave with the wicked and with the rich in his death, because he hath done no violence; neither was any deceit in his mouth: yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him, he hath put him to grief. When thou shalt make his soul *an offering for sin*, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied. By his knowledge (or, by the knowledge of him,) *shall my righteous servant justify many, for he shall bear their iniquities;* therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto

death, and he was numbered among the transgressors ; *and he bare the sins of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.*" Isaiah, c. liii.

We have quoted the whole of this remarkable prophecy, because it is so directly in point, that, was there not another text in the Bible to prove that the predetermined object of the Saviour's coming was to offer an atonement for sin, *this of itself* is amply sufficient to establish the fact, and is a most triumphant refutation of all the cavils that have ever been arrayed against the doctrine of the propitiation of Jesus Christ.

It asserts, in the most positive manner, that the sufferings of Christ were *not on his own account*, for he hath done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth : that they *were for the sins of others* ; he was wounded for *our* transgressions, and bruised for *our* iniquities, for the transgression of *my people* was he stricken : that on his part they were *perfectly voluntary* ; he poured out his soul unto death ; he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors : that they *were well pleasing to the Father, and consistent with his will*, for the Lord hath laid upon him the iniquity of us all. It *pleased the Lord* to bruise him and to put him to grief ; therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death.

With these assertions, the testimony of Christ and his apostles fully accords, as will be seen by the following texts : "Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and *to give his life a ransom for many.*" Matt. c. xx. v. 28. "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels ? But how then shall the Scriptures be *fulfilled that thus it must be.*" c. 26. "But all this was done, *that the Scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled.*" Matt. c. xxvi. 56.

As expressions similar to these frequently occur in the narratives of the evangelists, we may remark, that they positively assert certain things to be done, in order that the purposes of the Almighty, as predicted by his inspired prophets, might be duly accomplished ; and the things asserted thus to be done, relate not only to the birth and life, *but to the minute particulars of the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus.*

To return to our quotations—"O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken—*ought not Christ to have suffered these things*, and to enter into his glory." Luke c. xxiv. v. 25, 26. "These are *the words which I speak unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled*

which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me." v. 44. "And he said unto them, *thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name, among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*" v. 46. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." John, c. iii. v. 14. "I lay down my life for the sheep; therefore doth my Father love me because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself—I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again, *this commandment have I received of my Father.*" c. x. v. 15, 17, 18. Jesus saith to Pilate, "thou couldst have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." c. xix. v. 11. "Ye men of Israel hear these words, Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know—*HIM being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain.*" Acts, c. ii. v. 22, 23. "But those things which God before had shewed, by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, HE hath so fulfilled." c. iii. v. 18. "For of a truth against thy Holy Child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, *for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.*" c. iv. v. 27.

We have quoted but a small part of the abundant testimony which might be adduced from the sacred volume, relative to this interesting subject; and we would ask our readers, whether they can reconcile this language of Scripture with the assertions of Elias Hicks, where he argues, that God did by no means send his Son into the world purposely to suffer death, but only to live a righteous and godly life, and thereby to be a perfect example. If we believe the truth of the Bible, we must be directly at issue with his sentiments on these points.

The coming, and sufferings, and death of the Son of God in the flesh, were events, over which mere human power could have no control—*He took upon himself flesh, and in due time, laid down his own life, expressly declaring, "No man taketh it from me, I lay it down of myself."* The Scriptures say, he was delivered up to the Jews by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and that whatsoever they did against

him, *the Divine hand and counsel before determined to be done*. Now Elias Hicks says, that it was not the purpose and will of God that he should be put to death by the Jews, but merely, that he should set us a good example, by living a righteous and godly life. Here is an instance of direct contradiction ; and we can be at no loss in determining which account to believe.

But, says Elias Hicks, “ if it was the purpose and will of God, that he should die by the hands of wicked men, then the Jews by crucifying of him, would have done God’s will, and of course, would all have stood justified in his sight, which could not be.”

We say, this mode of reasoning is inadmissible, and if E. H. carries it throughout, he must, in numerous instances, impute the greatest injustice and cruelty to his “ benevolent Creator.” We shall notice the case of Pharaoh, as one of many.

The Lord sent Moses and Aaron unto him saying, “ Go in, speak unto Pharaoh king of Egypt, that he let the children of Israel go out of his land.”—But saith he also, “ And I will harden Pharaoh’s heart, and multiply my signs and my wonders in the land of Egypt ; but Pharaoh shall not hearken unto you, that I may lay my hand upon Egypt, and bring forth mine armies, and my people, the children of Israel, out of the land of Egypt by great judgments.” He not only hardened his heart, that he should not let the people go, but he further says, “ And indeed for this very cause, have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power, that my name may be declared throughout all the earth.”

Now to apply the reasoning of E. H. to this case. We will form an argument in his own way ; viz : If it was the purpose and will of God to harden Pharaoh’s heart, that he should not let the people of Israel go, then Pharaoh, by refusing to hearken unto the voice of Moses, and keeping them in bondage, would have done God’s will, and of course would have stood justified in his sight ; and hence all the punishments inflicted by the Almighty upon Pharaoh, in consequence of his refusal to let the children of Israel go, were cruel and unjust.

The argument in this case, is exactly parallel to that instituted by Elias Hicks to prove that it was not the purpose and will of God, that Christ should suffer death for mankind ; and if we admit his reasoning to be sound, we must charge the Almighty with injustice and wanton cruelty, in punishing Pharaoh, or else deny the Scripture account altogether.

The ways of God are above our ways, and beyond the ken of our puny powers, and it becomes us rather to believe and

adore, than to be pronouncing dogmatically what must, or must not, result from the fulfilment of his eternal purposes. The Omnipotent Ruler of the universe, "declareth the end from the beginning," and "ordereth all things after the counsel of his own will."

There is no position more universally admitted, than that He is the great First Cause, "by whom all things consist;" and yet those who believe this, are far from supposing that He is the author of moral evil, though they know that it abounds in the world. How far he *ordains*, and how far he *permits*, in the great plan of the moral government of man, is not for us to decide, any further than it is revealed to us in the Holy Scriptures: and although these declare that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, that he should not obey the command, yet, it would be impious to conclude, that God is thereby implicated in the sin of Pharaoh's rebellion.

The Jews, were completely *free agents* in the crucifixion of Christ. They were wicked and hardy enough, *voluntarily* to become the actors in putting to death the Lamb of God—not because they, were disposed to fulfil the "determinate counsel of God;" but for the very contrary reason, because they were "of their father the devil, who was a murderer from the beginning." And shall finite man presume to say, that because the Divine Being overruled their actions, and brought good out of evil, that he was an accomplice in their guilt, or that their wickedness was diminished?—No, *their intentions* were as diabolical as those of any murderer could be, and for *these* they stood deeply and justly convicted in the sight of Heaven, and for *these* they were punished.

The reasoning of Elias Hicks, which we last quoted, is therefore wholly inadmissible, and contradicts the testimony of the Scriptures.

He tells us in the preceding sentence, what Christ came into the world for, viz: "To live a righteous and godly life, (which was the design and end of God's creating man in the beginning) and thereby be a perfect example to such of mankind as should come to the knowledge of him and of his perfect life."

The assertions in this sentence amount to this: 1st. That Christ came only to live a righteous and godly life, and to be a perfect example; 2d. That the benefits of his coming were limited to such as should come to the knowledge of his perfect example; 3d. That the design of the Almighty in creating man in the beginning, was to live a righteous and godly life, and thereby to be a perfect example—Ergo, the design and end of God's sending Jesus Christ into the world was the

same, precisely, as his design in creating Adam. Thus, according to the assertions of Elias Hicks, the end of God's sending his Son in the flesh, was for no higher, or more important purpose, than the birth of the very meanest of the human species; for it must be evident, that it is the purpose of God, in sending every man into this world, that he should live a righteous and godly life, and thereby be a good example, and glorify his Creator.

Hence all those mighty preparations, which for hundreds of years had been making, to open the way for the advent of the Messiah; which began immediately after the fall of Adam, and were continued through the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations; and all those sublime predictions which are contained in the books of the prophets, setting forth the glory and majesty of the Redeemer's kingdom, terminated in an event, no more important or beneficial to mankind, than the birth of any *mortal, peccable being*. Is this consistent with the Scriptures? No—These assertions of Elias Hicks strip our blessed 'Lord of his eternal Divinity and Godhead and level him with mere man—his scheme cuts us off from all hope in the atonement; takes away the great and glorious objects for which Christ came and suffered in the flesh, and sweeps from the sacred page the most precious and consoling doctrines of the gospel.

We are confirmed in these views by the manner in which he speaks of his death, which he says, "was permitted to be, as it had been with many of the prophets, and wise and good men that were before him, who suffered death by the hands of wicked men for righteousness sake, as ensamples to those that came after, that they should account nothing too dear to give up for the truth's sake, not even their own lives."

Here, he associates the Son of God with "prophets, and wise and good men that were before him," as being his equals. He makes his death exactly similar to theirs, which is to say, that Christ was *a mere martyr*. This is not the language of the Bible.

Elias Hicks does not use one solitary sentence, throughout the whole letter, which would characterize our blessed Lord as the propitiation, the Saviour, the Mediator or Intercessor for a guilty world, although he writes the letter for the *very purpose* of giving his "views of the sufferings of the Son of God, and what was the object of the shedding of his blood on the cross, and what benefits resulted to mankind by the shedding of his blood!"

But although he has just assured us that Jesus Christ was

sent into the world for the same purpose for which Adam was created, and that his death was a parallel with that of "the prophets, and wise and good men that were before him," yet in the next sentence he says "But the shedding of his blood by the wicked scribes and pharisees and people of Israel, had a particular effect on the Jewish nation, as by this, *the topstone and worst of all their crimes*, was filled up the measure of their iniquities, and which put an end to that dispensation, together with its law and covenant."

Now we would ask, why did it happen that the death of Jesus Christ produced this particular effect on the Jewish nation, rather than the death of either of those "prophets, and wise and good men that were before him;" who, according to the testimony of Elias Hicks, were created for the same purpose, and died for the same causes, as did the Son of God?—As Elias Hicks says that God did not send him into the world *purposely* to suffer death, it must have been *a mere chance* that his death put an end to the law,—and as Isaiah, John the Baptist, James, Peter, and Paul, were all "wise and good men," and died "by the hands of wicked men for righteousness sake," we should like to know why Elias Hicks will make the death of Jesus Christ to produce this important effect, in preference to one of these?

He proceeds—"that as John's baptism summed up in one all the previous water baptisms of that dispensation and put an end to them, which he sealed with his blood, so *the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ* summed up in one all the outward atoning sacrifices of the shadowy dispensation, and put an end to them all, thereby abolishing the law," &c. "so that all the Israelites that believed on him, after he exclaimed on the cross, "It is finished," might abstain from all the rituals of their law, such as circumcision, water baptisms, outward sacrifices, seventh day sabbaths, and all their other holy days, and be blameless," &c.

'These surely are astonishing events to result from the death of one who came only to do what every man is required to do, and who merely died a martyr!

It appears, however, that Elias Hicks *does believe* that this "topstone and worst of all the crimes, committed by the scribes and Pharisees and people of Israel, by which the measure of their iniquity was filled up;" that this diabolical and wicked act, was the means of abolishing the Jewish law and dispensation.—Now if it was the will of God that this law should be abolished, and "the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ" was the appointed means of its abolishment, as Elias

Hicks asserts ; then from his own reasoning, the Jews did the will of God, in crucifying Christ, quite as fully as on the supposition that he came to suffer death for the sins of mankind.

Let us state the argument in his own language—For if it was the purpose and will of God, that the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ should sum up in one all the outward atoning sacrifices of the shadowy dispensation, and put an end to them all, thereby abolishing the law ; which put an end to that dispensation, together with its law and covenant ; then the Jews by crucifying Jesus Christ would have done God's will, and of course would all have stood justified in his sight.

But Elias Hicks says all this *was done* by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ. Therefore, according to his reasoning, the Jews did the will of God in committing this top-stone and worst of all their crimes. We have here another specimen of his inconsistencies, indeed the letter presents us with a tissue of them, on almost every page.

If, to extricate himself from this difficulty, he says that it was not the purpose and will of God thus to abolish the law, he must consider the Jewish law as still in force, and to be consistent, he should observe all its rituals and ceremonies. And he *has* virtually asserted this ; for as he declares that Christ did not come “purposely to suffer death,” and that his death was the topstone and worst of all the crimes committed by the Jewish nation, and consequently very contrary to the purpose and will of God in sending him into the world, it follows from his mode of reasoning, that if this murderous deed abolished the law, it must have been done away contrary to the purpose and will of God—Ergo, the Law of Moses ought still to be in force.

Let any serious person read the account of the delivery of the law to the children of Israel, and the solemn injunctions which were laid upon them to observe all its rituals ; and then say whether he thinks it probable that *an event* which was to annul that law and do it completely away, never came within the design and purposes and will of the Divine Lawgiver ?

Is it probable that a law, ratified and sealed by so many awful and impressive sanctions, could be abrogated by the mere *accidental death of a martyr* ? We say accidental, because Elias Hicks asserts that his death was no part of the divine purpose and will in sending Jesus Christ into the world.

Our readers will perceive from the Scripture narrative that this law partook of the nature of a covenant made between two parties, the Almighty and the children of Israel—as the consent of both parties was necessary to its ratification and

observance, so it was also necessary to the abrogation—it could not be dissolved and abolished by the act of the Jews only, who were infinitely the inferior party.—If therefore it be repealed, it must have been done by the consent and will of Him who first gave it.—It was abolished in the wisdom and will of God, and as Elias Hicks declares that the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ, abolished it, it follows from his own positions, that the Jews did the will of God in putting Jesus to death.

He proceeds to tell us, “he does not consider that the crucifixion of the outward body of flesh and blood of Jesus on the cross, was an atonement for any sins, but the legal sins of the Jews; for as their law was outward, so their legal sins and their penalties were outward, and these could be atoned for by an outward sacrifice.”

We have always understood the word *sin* to mean moral evil—the violation of the law and commands of God; and we are at a loss to know what “outward or legal sin” can mean. If God command his creature man to do any act, however unimportant in itself the thing may appear to him to be, disobedience to that command is *positive sin*—it is moral evil. The thing abstractly considered, may be neither good nor evil; the crime is in transgressing the law of God, and this must always be *absolute sin*. If Elias Hicks alludes to the neglect of the Jewish ritual, when he speaks of “legal or outward sin,” the case is not altered. The Jews were as positively commanded to observe all those rituals, as they were to fulfil the precepts of the Decalogue; and the neglect to do so, was an act of rebellion and disobedience to a positive command of God, and therefore was actual sin or moral evil.

Now Elias Hicks distinctly admits in the sentence which we last quoted from his letter, that the *crucifixion* of the outward body of flesh and blood of Jesus on the cross, *was an atonement* for these *legal sins* of the Jews—that is, that the Jews were released from the curse or penalty which they had incurred by transgressing their law, through the stoning sacrifice, or sufferings and death of Jesus Christ, whom he calls “an innocent and righteous one.”

In admitting, therefore, that the legal sins of the Jews could be, and were atoned for, by an outward sacrifice, and that this sacrifice was the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, Elias Hicks has fully recognized and granted the *principle* of the propitiatory sufferings and death of “an innocent and righteous one” on behalf, and in lieu of the guilty; and yet in the same letter, speaking of the *Christian's* belief in this doc-

trine, he declares it to be "wicked and absurd"—"an outrage against every righteous law of God and man," and asks whether "any rational creature that has any right sense of justice and mercy, would be willing to accept forgiveness of his sins upon such terms?"

Is this consistency? To admit the doctrine of atonement on one page, and anathematize it, and the believers in it, on the next? The distinction of "legal or outward sin," makes nothing in his favour, for the *principle of atonement* is the same, even if we admit the distinction to be correct, which it evidently is not. If the sins of the Jews could be atoned for by an outward sacrifice, and "this too by the hands of wicked men, slaying an innocent and righteous one," as Elias Hicks asserts; upon the *same principle* the sins of Christians may be atoned for, by the same sacrifice. What are we to think then of his expressions in relation to those who believe in the *apostle's* doctrine of the atonement, when he says, that any person "acknowledging a willingness to be saved through *such a medium*, would shew himself to be a poor selfish creature unworthy of notice?"

He *admits* the doctrine in behalf of the Jews, why then condemn those who claim it for *Christians*?

He proceeds in his letter—"And this last outward sacrifice was a full type of the inward sacrifice, that every sinner must make, in giving up that sinful life of his own will, in and by which, he hath from time to time crucified the innocent life of God in his own soul"—"Now all this life, power, and will of man, must be slain and die on the cross spiritually, as Jesus died on the cross outwardly, and this is the *true atonement*, which that outward atonement was a clear and full type of."

This mystical language of "giving up that sinful life, and its being slain and dying on the cross," &c. means simply that a wicked man should forsake his wickedness and learn to do well; and the sentiment is thus fairly inculcated, that a man may *make atonement for his own sins*: that he may go on for years sinning against God, then turn about and become religious, and claim the *forgiveness of his past sins* as due to his *present righteousness*. On the same principle, *past righteousness* could atone for *present sin*; all which is entirely contrary to the plainest doctrines of the Gospel. The natural depravity of man, his utter helplessness, and his inability to extricate himself from the wretched situation into which sin has plunged him, the necessity of a propitiation and a mediator, are fully set forth in the sacred volume.

Our blessed Lord told his disciples, that after they had done

all that was commanded them, they should say, "we are unprofitable servants, we have done no more than it was our duty to do." Now, we are commanded to keep the whole law of God all our lives long, and it is our *duty* to obey this command. If a man go on in rebellion against this law for a series of years, and is then through the goodness of God, awakened to a sense of his sinful state, and begins to amend his ways—or as Elias Hicks expresses it, "gives up that sinful life of his own will to die on the cross," can this amendment of life be any atonement for his past wickedness, when, if he had faithfully kept the *whole* law of God *all his days*, he would have been but *an unprofitable servant*, and would have done *no more than it was his duty to do?* Certainly not—This doctrine of self-atonement, inculcated by Elias Hicks, is no where mentioned in the Scriptures, nor supported by them.

Speaking of the sin of our first parents, he says, "They don't appear to have been guilty of but one *failure*, and that it appears they made satisfaction for, at the time of their first arraignment by their benevolent Creator, manifesting sorrow and repentance."

That the transgression of Adam and Eve, merited a more forcible appellation than "a failure or a mis-step," is very obvious from the punishment which followed it. Now, to examine the assertions of Elias Hicks: first, that "it appears they made satisfaction for this failure at the time of their first arraignment."

This is not only unsupported by the testimony of the Holy Scriptures, but inconsistent with it. If our first parents made satisfaction for the crime they committed, they must have done away the guilt and penalty; and it would have been highly unjust in their benevolent Creator to punish them for "a failure," which they had made satisfaction for. But the Bible tells us that he did *punish* them, consequently they could not have made satisfaction for the sin.

Further, he says, "they manifested sorrow and repentance." This is equally at variance with the Bible. It tells us that they began making excuses, and trying to shift the blame upon some one else. The woman says, "the serpent beguiled me, and I did eat;" and Adam, as though he would impute a part of the blame to his Maker, says, "the woman whom *thou gavest me to be with me*, she gave me of the tree and I did eat."

We are unable to find any token of sorrow or repentance in any part of the Scripture narrative. Adam and Eve seem to entertain no idea of having made satisfaction, or they would not

have attempted to hide themselves from the presence of their benevolent Creator. Adam says, "I heard thy voice in the garden, and *I was afraid.*" Where would have been the occasion for this fear, if they had made satisfaction for the crime, and manifested sorrow and repentance?

The next sentence is predicated upon no better authority, viz. "Which (viz. their making satisfaction, &c.) seems to be fairly implied by the sequel of the interview between them, for it is said he clothed them with coats of skin to hide their nakedness, which is an emblem of durable clothing," &c.

Clothing them with coats of skin was certainly no evidence of their having made satisfaction; because, while in a state of innocence and purity, *before* they sinned, they were naked and needed no clothing. The *necessity for clothing* was a consequence of their sin; and the wearing of it must have been a constant and painful memento of their fall from their primeval state of happiness. The Hebrew word signifies the "skins of beasts," and we should rather think these emblematic of the ascendancy which the animal passions had obtained over them by their fall, than of the pure and holy covering of the Lord's Spirit, which Elias Hicks would make them to signify.

Again, says Elias Hicks, "their nakedness was *not an outward one*, but a nakedness of soul."

The Bible says, "*they were both naked, the man and his wife, and they were not ashamed.*" This proves beyond a doubt that their nakedness *was an outward nakedness*, else why say "*they were not ashamed?*" We would ask Elias Hicks, if it was not an outward nakedness, how could he clothe them with coats of skin? Could "*a nakedness of soul,*" be removed by covering them with garments made from the skins of beasts?

He proceeds: "And inasmuch as those idle promulgators of original sin, believe they are made sinners without their consent or knowledge, which, according to the nature and reason of things, every rational mind must see is impossible, so likewise they are idle and ignorant enough to believe they are made righteous without their consent or knowledge, by the righteousness of one who lived on the earth near two thousand years before they had an existence; and this by the cruel hands of wicked men slaying an innocent and righteous one."

We would request our readers particularly to notice, that the subject treated of in this part of the letter, (from the sentence which we have just quoted, to the concluding paragraph,) is *undeniably* the Christian's belief in the doctrine of the propitiation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We

should recollect, too, that Elias Hicks has before granted the principle of atonement, by admitting that the crucifixion of the outward body of flesh and blood of Jesus on the cross, was an atonement for the legal sins of the Jews; and of consequence, he makes the Jews *righteous*, touching those points of the law wherein they had transgressed, (or their legal sins,) "by the righteousness of one who lived on the earth," nearly fifteen hundred years after that law was given; "and this by the cruel hands of wicked men slaying an innocent and righteous one;" he is therefore as much chargeable with being "idle and ignorant" in doing so, as those are who hold up the propitiation of Jesus Christ, for the belief of Christians. We do not, however, consider his statement to be correct, as we are not acquainted with any Christians who believe they are made righteous *without their consent or knowledge*, through the atoning blood of the Son of God.

While we reverently and gratefully acknowledge the advantages purchased for mankind by his precious sufferings and death on the cross, we are far from believing that this alone, constitutes the whole work of the Christian's salvation. We believe most sincerely, that his death was the procuring cause of the more full and general diffusion of the Holy Spirit, which constitutes the glory of these gospel days; and that obedience to the influences of this Spirit, is necessary to complete the work of sanctification. Yet we can no more separate the outpouring of the Holy Ghost, and the mediation and intercession of our adorable Redeemer, from that most acceptable sacrifice which he made of himself for the sins of the whole world, than we can assert that this sacrifice alone, justifies the sinner while he continues in his sins. The outward offering and the inward work are necessarily and inseparably connected, as cause and effect, and are both essential to man's salvation.

We have already cited many texts of Scripture, which assert that our blessed Lord and his apostles taught the very doctrine which Elias Hicks stiles us "idle and ignorant" for believing; and the only defence which we shall make on the occasion, is to ask the question, Who is most likely to be right, Jesus Christ and his apostles, or Elias Hicks?

The following language of Paul, "who was not a whit behind the very chiefest of the apostles," comes directly to the point mentioned in the last quotation from the letter: "And, therefore, it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now, it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him, but *for us also, to whom it shall be imputed*, if we believe on

him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for *our offences*, and was raised again for *our justification*." Rom. c. iv., v. 22, 23, 24, 25. "Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, *even so by the righteousness of one*, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life; for as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the *obedience of one* shall many be made *righteous*." Rom. c. v. 18.

Again, Elias Hicks says, "And these, (viz. those who believe that the atonement was for the sins of the whole world,) are bold and daring enough to lay this cruel and unholy act in the charge of divine justice, as having purposely ordained it to be so; but what an outrage it is against every righteous law of God and man, as the Scriptures abundantly testify," &c.

On this passage we shall only remark, that we have proved before, that Elias Hicks by making this "cruel and unholy act," the means of abolishing the law and atoning for the sins of the Jews, has "laid it in the charge of divine justice," fully as much as though he believed with the apostle John, that Jesus Christ was "the propitiation, not for our (the Jew's) sins *only*, but for the sins of *the whole world*."

It is a little remarkable that, from *his abundant* testimony in the Scriptures, he could not have produced some passages more relevant and forcible than those he has selected. They make directly against him: for although he charges the Jews with committing this "cruel and unholy act," yet he grants that it was an atonement for *their legal sins*, which seems like *giving* them a reward for slaying the innocent.

"And much," he says, "might be produced to show the wickedness and absurdity of the doctrine, that would accuse the perfectly just, all wise, and merciful Jehovah, of so barbarous and cruel an act, as that of slaying his innocent and righteous Son, to atone for the sins and iniquities of the ungodly."

"The doctrine," to which Elias Hicks attaches this wickedness and absurdity, is that of the atonement of Jesus Christ. We are not aware, however, that "the doctrine," or any of its believers, bring this gross accusation against the Supreme Being. His letter makes this "barbarous act," the appointed means of abolishing the law, and of atoning for the sins of the Jews, who committed it; and hence he would seem, from his own reasoning, quite as fully to make the accusation, as those to whom he wishes to impute it.

We regret that he cannot refer to the doctrine in question,

without branding it with epithets which must be painful to a pious Christians. Throughout the whole letter, the subject is not once alluded to, without an attempt lamentably obvious, to present it in a forbidding, or even disgusting form. Christian charity would, we should suppose, induce him to respect the feelings of those who *sincerely* believe, according to Scripture testimony, that it is the only medium which God hath appointed for reconciling to himself a guilty world.

"Surely," he says, "is it possible, that any rational being that has any right sense of justice or mercy, that would be willing to *ACCEPT* forgiveness of his sins on such terms."

The words "such terms," evidently mean the vicarious sufferings of Jesus Christ—Once more then to the Bible. Does it not tell us in the plainest language that can possibly be used, that this propitiation is the medium of redemption—that *these are the terms* upon which forgiveness of sin is offered?

Paul says to the Romans, "Whom God hath set forth to be a *propitiation through faith in his blood*, to declare his righteousness for the *remission of sins that are past*, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him which *believeth in Jesus*." To the Corinthians, "For he hath made him to be *sin* (or, a sin offering) *for us*, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." To the Galatians, "Who *gave himself for our sins*, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father." To the Ephesians, "Be ye kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving one another, *even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you*."—"To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us *accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood*, even the *forgiveness of sins*, according to the riches of his grace." To the Colossians, "And you that were sometime alienated, and enemies in your minds, by wicked works, *yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death* to present you holy and unblameable, and unreprouable in his sight." To Timothy, "For there is one God, *and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all*, to be testified in due time."

To Titus, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of our great God and Saviour Jesus Christ, *who gave himself for us*, that he might *redeem us from all iniquity*, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." To the Hebrews, "By the which will we are sanctified, *through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all*"—"for by

one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." Peter declares, " Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not *redeemed* with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers, *but by the precious blood of Christ as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot.*" " Who, his *ownself bare our sins in his own body on the tree*, that we being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness, *by whose stripes ye were healed.*" " For Christ also, hath once suffered for sins, *the just for the unjust*, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit."

After reading these and many other portions of holy Scripture which we could adduce if necessary, can any one doubt that God does offer us forgiveness of sins upon "*such terms*," (as Elias Hicks calls the propitiation of our Redeemer), and upon none other; yet he queries, whether "*any rational being that has any right sense of justice or mercy, would be willing to accept it.*"

But Elias Hicks by using the word ACCEPT, must necessarily suppose that "*such terms*" might be offered—for how could a man *accept* what was not tendered to him?—And yet, although it is *God who offers*, man, the sinner, may refuse to accept them. And why not *accept* them? Because he says "*such terms are wicked and absurd, and an outrage against every righteous law of God and man.*"

Does he suppose then, that the Holy, Wise, and Just God, has offered, or could offer to us, the forgiveness of sins upon such terms, that if man has any right sense of justice and mercy, he would not accept them? How destitute then of any right sense of justice and mercy, does the reasoning of this letter make Him to be, who, as the Bible declares, *does offer to our acceptance "such terms."*"

Elias Hicks, as we have before stated, asserts that upon "*such terms*" forgiveness of sins was offered to the Jews; that is, "*by the hands of wicked men slaying an innocent and righteous one.*" Now we should like to know, whether he considers those Jews who *accepted "such terms,"* to have been destitute "*of any right sense of justice or mercy;*" to have been "*standing in direct opposition to every principle of justice and honesty, of mercy and love, and to have been poor, selfish creatures, unworthy of notice.*" It would follow from his reasoning on this subject, that those Jews who utterly rejected the atonement which, Elias Hicks says, expiated their sins, and persecuted Jesus Christ unto death, were the most just and honest among their nation, and the least selfish in their views.

Again : says Elias Hicks, "Would he not rather go forward and offer himself wholly up to suffer all the penalties due to his crimes, rather than the innocent should suffer?"

As regards the sufferings of Jesus Christ, they were *entirely voluntary*, as the Scriptures abundantly shew ; consequently the latter clause of this sentence loses all its force. He *freely and of his own will*, gave himself a *ransom* for us—a sacrifice well pleasing unto God.

What now is the penalty, or "all the penalties, due to man's crimes ? Let the Bible answer : "Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that doeth evil"—"Everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power"—"To be cast into hell"—"Suffering the vengeance of eternal fire"—"Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched"—"To be cast into the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone"—"The smoke of whose torment ascendeth for ever and ever."

Is it not, then, a plain inference from the language of this letter, "that any rational being that has any right sense of justice and mercy, would rather go forward, and offer his soul up to suffer all these penalties," than *accept the forgiveness of sins through the propitiatory sacrifice of Jesus Christ*? And yet the Scriptures, as we have before shown, assert that these are the terms upon which that forgiveness is offered.

"Nay," says Elias Hicks, "was he so hardy as to acknowledge a willingness *to be saved through such a medium*, would it not prove that he stood in direct opposition to every principle of justice and honesty, of mercy and love, and show himself to be a poor selfish creature, and unworthy of notice?"

Here, the words "*such a medium*," refer to the atonement, as must be evident from the context. What, then, saith this sentence ? Was any rational being so hardy as to acknowledge a willingness to be saved through *that medium*, which the Holy Scriptures declare to be the *only medium of salvation* that God hath appointed, viz. the coming, sufferings, and death of the Son of God, as a sacrifice for sin ; would it not prove that *rational being* to be standing in direct opposition to every principle of justice and honesty, of mercy and love, and show him to be a poor selfish creature, and unworthy of notice ?

Now, if man would thus debase and degrade himself by *accepting*, or by merely acknowledging a *willingness* to be saved through the offered medium ; what must HE be who could ordain and appoint that medium ? We tremble when we reflect upon the inferences which result from the reasoning contained in this letter. Does it not make the pure and ini-

nite Jehovah, the Judge of the spirits of all flesh, to be standing in direct opposition to every principle of justice and honesty, of mercy and love, and to be a poor selfish creature, and unworthy of notice!!

Let the reader contrast the sentiments avowed in this letter, with the views and feelings of a *truly awakened* and penitent sinner.

Humbled in the dust under an agonizing sense of the amazing weight of his sins, and the just punishment which they merit; conscious of his utter inability to extricate himself from the dreadful situation into which his iniquities have plunged him; the repenting sinner casts about him a look of anxious inquiry, and exclaims in the anguish of remorse, "Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

Conscious of his utter unworthiness and nothingness in the Divine sight, he "dares not so much as lift his eyes to heaven;" but "smiting upon his breast," cries out "God be merciful to me a sinner." Fully aware that his multiplied crimes have brought upon him all the penalties of the violated law, and that the just sentence of everlasting condemnation is upon him, he can most truly and sincerely adopt the language, "A Saviour or I die, a *Redeemer* or I perish for ever."

Would such a man talk of *not accepting* the forgiveness of his sins, on the terms of the propitiation of Jesus Christ? Would he consider the doctrine of the atonement as wicked and absurd; as an outrage against every righteous law of God and man? Would he go forward and offer himself wholly up to suffer all the pangs and woes and torments which he *feels* to be due to his crimes, rather than be saved through that medium which the Bible declares, God has offered him?

Far, very far from this. With what humble, reverent gratitude and joy would such a suppliant sinner listen to the gladdening assurances of the gospel, "That when we were yet without strength, in due time, *Christ died for the ungodly*"—that God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us; "that being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him;" "for if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."

How fully, how emphatically, would these gracious declarations, prove "glad tidings of great joy," to such a sinner as we have described, and how different would every feeling and sentiment of his soul be, from the language of this letter.

The author of this letter appears to deny the divinity and Godhead of Jesus Christ, and to consider him a mere man. He rejects the Christian doctrine of the atonement in the most decided and positive language.—His scheme cuts us off from all hope of mercy through this means, and makes man the *Redeemer* of himself.

Well may we adopt the language of an inspired writer “Can a man be profitable unto God, as he that is wise may be profitable unto himself? Is it any pleasure to the Almighty that thou art righteous, or is it any gain to him that thou makest thy ways perfect? What hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received it?”

Instead of claiming the forgiveness of sins and the blessedness of heaven on the ground of personal worthiness, it would be acting more in character, for a sinful wretch to cry out, “Behold I am vile, what shall I answer thee? I will lay my hand upon my mouth—Once have I spoken, but I will not answer, yea twice, but I will proceed no further. Enter not into judgment with thy servant, Oh! Lord, for in thy sight shall no man living be justified.”

The author of the document which we have been examining, commences his observations with saying, that “all truth is simple when we free ourselves from the improper *bias of tradition* and *education*;” and concludes them, by recommending us to “shake off *all traditional views* imbibed from *external evidences*,” a term which he frequently uses to designate the Holy Scriptures.

It appears from these expressions, as well as from the general tenor of the letter, that it is a necessary preliminary to becoming converts to Elias Hicks’ doctrine, that we should divest our minds of all regard to, or belief in, those plain and positive truths which we have been taught to revere from our childhood; which holy men of all ages and of different countries, since the Christian era, have held most sacred—*Truths*, which the Scriptures assert in the most solemn and impressive manner, and in support of which, thousands of pious Christians have suffered martyrdom. And truly we think, that before any person of sane mind, could adopt the sentiments which this letter contains, he must shake off, not only “all traditional views,” but also a due reverence for sacred things, as well as all common sense and consistency, and totally discard his belief in the sacred volume.

END OF THE REVIEW.

EXTRACT.

The following quotation from the writings of George Fox, will shew the views of the Society of Friends relative to the doctrines of the Divinity and propitiation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, from which it will be seen that the notions of Elias Hicks on these points are entirely at variance with them.

In a declaration of faith on behalf of the Society he says:—

“Whereas, many scandalous lies and slanders have been cast upon us, to render us odious; as that we deny God, Christ Jesus, and the Scriptures of Truth, &c. This is to inform you, that all our books and declarations, which for these many years have been published to the world, clearly testify the contrary. Yet for your satisfaction, we now plainly and sincerely declare—

“That we own and believe in the only, wise, omnipotent, and everlasting God, the Creator of all things in heaven and earth, and the Preserver of all that he hath made; who is God over all blessed for ever, to whom be all honour, glory, dominion, praise, and thanksgiving, both now and for evermore!

“And we own and believe in Jesus Christ, his beloved and only begotten Son, in whom he is well pleased, who was conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary; in whom we have redemption, through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins; who is the express image of the invisible God, the First Born of every Creature; by whom were all things created that are in Heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, dominions, principalities, or powers, all things were created by Him.

“And we own and believe, that he was made a sacrifice for sin who knew no sin; neither was guile found in his mouth; that he was crucified for us, in the flesh, without the gates of Jerusalem; and that he was buried and rose again the third day, by the power of his Father, for our justification, and that he ascended up into Heaven, and now sitteth at the right hand of God.

“This Jesus, who was the foundation of the holy prophets and apostles, is our foundation; and we believe there is no other foundation to be laid, but that which is laid, even Christ

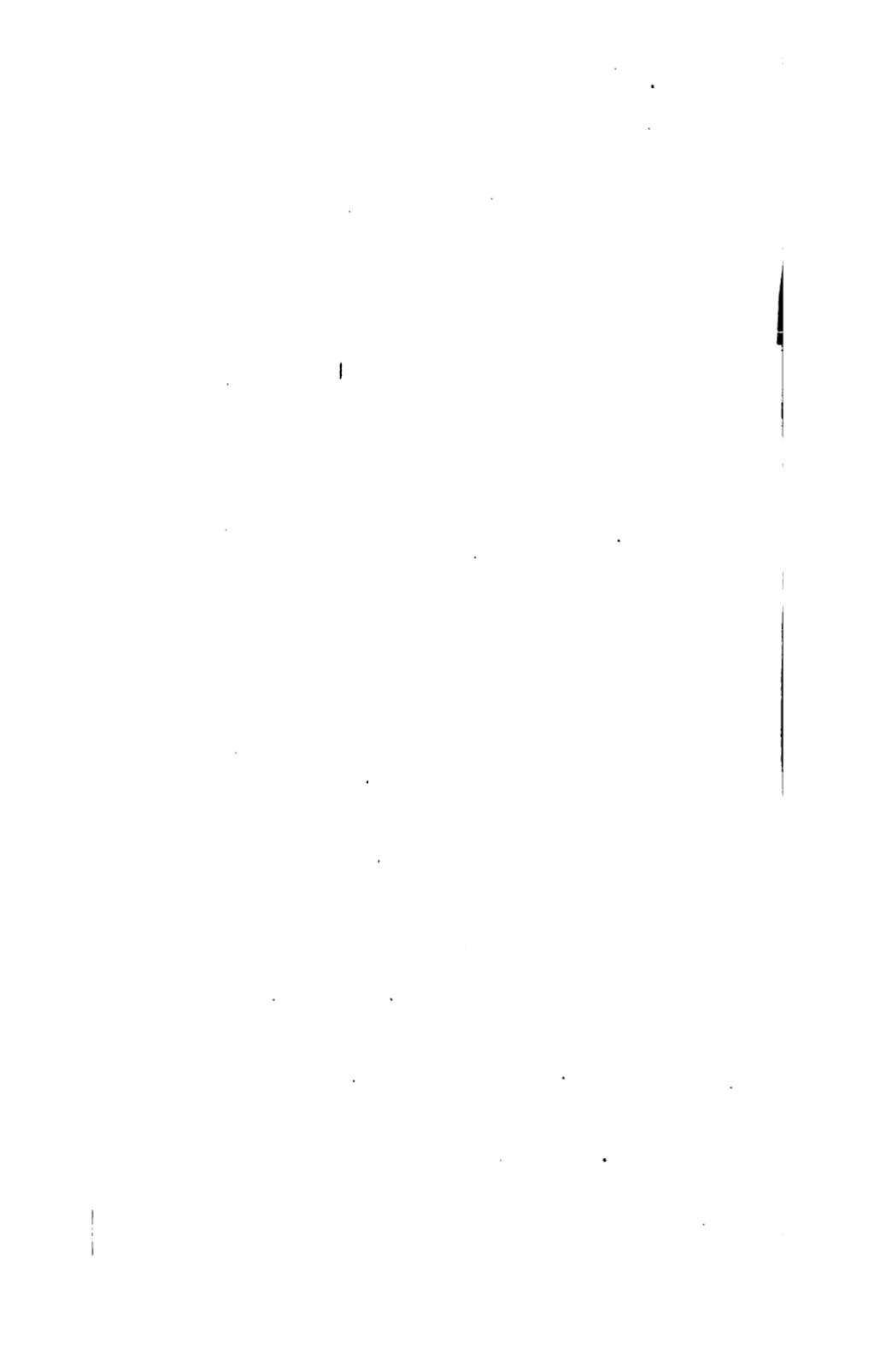
Jesus, who tasted death for every man, shed his blood for all men ; is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world : according as John the Baptist testified of him, when he said, ' Behold the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.' John i. 29.

" We believe that He alone is our Redeemer and Saviour, the Captain of our salvation, who saves us from sin, as well as from hell and the wrath to come, and destroys the devil and his works ; He is the seed of the woman, that bruises the serpent's head, viz. Christ Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last. He is, as the Scriptures of truth say of him, our wisdom, righteousness, justification and redemption ; neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we may be saved. He alone is the Shepherd and Bishop of our souls : He is our Prophet whom Moses long since testified of, saying, ' A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren like unto me ; Him shall ye hear in all things, whatsoever He shall say unto you : and it shall come to pass that every soul that will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.' Acts ii. 22, 23.

" He is now come in Spirit, ' and hath given us an understanding that we know him that is true.' He rules in our hearts by his law of love and life, and makes us free from the law of sin and death. We have no life but by him, for He is the quickening Spirit, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, by whose blood we are cleansed and our consciences sprinkled from dead works to serve the living God. He is our Mediator, who makes peace and reconciliation between God offended, and us offending ; he being the Oath of God, the new covenant of light, life, grace and peace, the author and finisher of our faith. This Lord Jesus Christ, the heavenly Man, the Immanuel, God with us, we all own and believe in : He whom the high priest raged against, and said he had spoken blasphemy ; whom the priests and elders of the Jews took counsel together against, and put to death ; the same whom Judas betrayed for thirty pieces of silver, which the priests gave him as a reward for his treason ; who also gave large money to the soldiers, to broach a horrible lie, namely, that his disciple came and stole him away by night whilst they slept. After he was risen from the dead, the history of the Acts of the Apostles sets forth, how the chief priests and elders persecuted the disciples of this Jesus, for preaching Christ and his resurrection. This, we say, is that Lord Jesus Christ whom we own to be our life and salvation." P. 145, 146, Journal, vol. ii.—1673







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